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## **JAEGER TO TAKE PART IN ELECTION REFORM DISCUSSIONS**

**Bismarck, N.D.** - Secretary of State Al Jaeger will take part in discussions related to national election reform this week by attending a conference hosted by the Johnson Foundation in Racine, WI.

Jaeger was asked to represent the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) at the Johnson Foundation conference to convey the election related interests of the nation's Secretaries of State. A majority of the nation's Secretaries of State serve as chief election officials in their respective states.

The purpose of the intensive, two-day conference, beginning April 10, is to bring together representatives from the various election reform commissions and task forces that have formed in the wake of the 2000 election controversy to consider a variety of concerns from both the federal and state levels.

"Our hope is that as a result of this conference, participants and the organizations they represent will move closer to agreement on how best to address the many issues arising out of the 2000 election," said Christopher Beem, Ph.D, and program officer for the Johnson Foundation.

At its recent winter meeting, NASS approved a resolution calling for election reform that outlined twelve points for state and local governments to work towards. It also adopted four recommendations for Congress to consider. In addition, NASS approved a companion resolution that specifically supported the Federal Election Commission's supplemental budget request for funds to update the Voluntary Federal Voting System Standards and to develop additional standards for new and existing voting systems. Jaeger will be delivering these resolutions for discussion and consideration at Johnson Foundation meeting. Copies of the resolutions are attached.

"Because of the front line role most Secretaries of State play in overseeing elections in their individual states, it is essential that Secretaries of State be included in all discussions related to election reform," said Jaeger.

Also invited to attend the Johnson Foundation conference are representatives from the Election Center; International Association of County Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers; International Institute of Municipal Clerks; National Association of Counties; National Association of County Recorders and Clerks; National Association of State Election Directors; National Commission on Election Reform; and National Conference of State Legislatures.

Jaeger is also hopeful that his attendance at the conference will have a direct benefit to North Dakota. North Dakota will conduct a comprehensive study and assessment of its election laws and procedures during the next two years as a result of the recent passage of House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 3039.

“This gathering is very timely,” said Jaeger. “My involvement in the dialogue at the national level will be valuable towards our study efforts here in North Dakota.”

North Dakota’s study will include representation from the state’s elections community and various political subdivisions. All conclusions and recommendation from the study will be made to the 2003 Legislative Assembly for their consideration.

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